

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Rebecca McCrary, Long Range Planning Manager
DATE: April 28, 2021
RE: **Countywide Planning Policies Update Project and Summary**

This memo is a summary of the current Countywide Planning Policies Update project and the relationship to the City's 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Background

The Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) establish a countywide framework for developing and adopting county, city, and town comprehensive plans. This process is conducted using the cooperative and collaborative public inter-jurisdictional forum of Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT).

Updates of the CPPs are required in advance of state mandated Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) Comprehensive Plan updates and must be consistent with any multicounty planning policies adopted by the regional planning authority. The update shall also be informed by a Buildable Lands Report setting the baseline for planning expected growth over the next planning period in a coordinated and orderly manner. This effort is to ensure necessary and adequate infrastructure, services, and environmental protection can be accomplished to meet the growth targets.

CPPs must be consistent with the GMA and the PSRC Regional Growth Strategy adopted in VISION 2050. The new planning period covered in this updated is the twenty years between 2024 and 2044.

VISION 2050, adopted in October 2020, updated previous growth strategy in VISION 2040. The update highlights issues of substantial growth and implementing new regional policies related to equity, displacement, climate change, and High Capacity Transit Communities. The full text of the current draft CPPs are accessed on the County website at [Countywide-Planning-Policies](#).

PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORK POLICIES

The CPPs are organized around Central Principles and Framework Policies that describe how policies within the CPPs relate and establishes consistency with GMA and VISION 2050.

General Framework Policies

This section sets forth the foundation of overarching of topics that establish the policy direction. These topics include:

- Flexibility in local interpretations of policies;
- Collaboration;
- Importance of greenhouse gas emissions consideration during land use, transportation, and economic and social structure decisions; and
- Requirements to allocate projected population and employment growth.

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The City will be involved in the procedures in this section for establishing new growth targets over the next few months to further lay the groundwork for the Comprehensive Plan Update. The City will have to deal with both new growth targets and any growth target shortfalls from the current planning period based on the Buildable Lands analysis. A list of Reasonable Measure to address shortfalls are also part of the CPPs and typically used to resolve this issue.

Joint Planning Policies

The Joint Planning Policies provide guidance on planning between the County and cities and may involve other public agencies. These policies focus on collaboration, cooperation, and call for orderly transition including the need for interlocal agreements during annexations of unincorporated urban growth areas.

The following CPP Chapters include specific topics around six subjects.

Development Patterns

Development Patterns policies focus on the physical forms and quality of life issues in land use planning. The updates include supporting transit-oriented development and the importance of consistency with the Regional Growth Strategy. Additional policy language has been added to address equity and displacement. Specific sections include:

- Urban Growth Areas (and Municipal Urban Growth Areas also referred to as UGA and MUGA), Centers and Compact Urban Communities, and Unincorporated Urban Growth Areas;
- Rural Land Use and Resources Lands; and
- Orderly Development, Community Design, and the Built Environment and Health.

Everett has both a designated Regional Growth Center in the [Downtown Area](#) and Manufacturing and Industrial Center in the [Paine Field/Boeing industrial area](#). The City's Comprehensive Plan must consider the focus of future population and employment growth in these Centers.

Housing

The updates to the Housing Section recognize the significant housing needs for all economic segments of the population in the Region and emphasize the importance of local action as a critical component in the provision of affordable housing. The goals and policies direct jurisdictions to access their housing needs, promote fair and equitable access to housing, facilitate the regional fair share of affordable housing, and diversify the housing stock for both home ownership and rental opportunities. Policies also require Metropolitan cities, Core cities, and High Capacity Transit Communities to incorporate strategies into Comprehensive Plans to reduce the risk of displacement of historically marginalized populations as part growth. The City is currently working on a Housing Action Plan that includes anti-displacement strategies expected to be approved in September 2021. These strategies will also be incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan during the update.

Economic Development and Employment

This section focuses on economic sustainability throughout the County with goals to improve access to opportunity and employment promoting living wage jobs for traditionally underserved individuals. Sustainability includes an emphasis on prosperity, climate change and the natural environment. Mitigating the impacts of economic and cultural displacement is a key concept of the updated language.

Transportation

Updates to the Transportation Policies place heavy importance on climate change/green house gases, equity, and strategies related to the planning and infrastructure investments of the Sound Transit Light Rail service and other transit improvements expected in Snohomish County. Everett is already working with Sound Transit on ST3 planning efforts.



The Natural Environment and Climate Change

Changes to this section intend to strengthen environmental protection through known strategies and best practices. The Climate Change policies specifically target greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets. The City of Everett has already done work to address climate change and adopted a [Climate Action Plan](#) in January 29, 2020. Updates to incorporate CPP policy direction to this plan and the current Comprehensive Plan will likely be necessary.

Public Services and Facilities

These policies provide guidance on infrastructure other than transportation such as water, sewer, and telecommunications. It is also the section establishing the process for siting Essential Public Facilities. Policies have been updated to include consideration of climate change and reducing impacts and increasing access to public services to historically marginalized underserved populations.

Appendices

Appendices include charts, maps, and processes or procedures as referenced in the applicable CPP sections. These are:

- A. UGA and MUGA Boundary Maps
- B. Growth Targets (Charts)
- C. Growth Target Procedure Steps for G-5
- D. Reasonable Measures
- E. Procedures for Buildable Land Reporting in Response to GF-7
- F. List of Issues for Interlocal Agreements
- G. Definition of Key Terms
- H. Fiscal Impact Analysis
- I. Centers (Process for designating Centers)

NEXT STEPS

The SCT Planning Advisory Committee is expected to make a recommendation to the SCT Steering Committee May 13th who will make a recommendation to the County Council this summer. The County Council is expected to consider the CPPs for adoption in early fall. The Planning Department is expecting to begin early work on the 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan Update in late fall. A part of this project includes a full analysis of CPP consistency.

